

Community Briefing

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JANUARY – MARCH 2008



WORDS FROM CHIEF HALL

The Westminster Police Department (WPD) was recently honored by the Orange County Human Relations Commission for Excellence in Community Policing. Our Police/Mental Health Partnership and leadership of the Orange County Human Trafficking were specifically recognized as exemplary programs. We appreciate this recognition and are inspired to continue innovating new policing strategies.

The first quarter of 2008 was a good one for the department. We experienced a great deal of success in patrol, often identifying and capturing criminals within minutes of the crime. Our staffing levels remain strong and turnover is very low so most patrol shifts are able to engage in proactive patrol strategies that lead to successful intervention.

The new Special Investigations Unit (SIU) has been busy addressing problem locations throughout the city. Most recently, the unit was very influential in taming a bar and pool hall that had become magnets for criminal activity.

The Department's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator has successfully established a Community Emergency Response Team (C.E.R.T.), and planning for the new police facility continues on budget and on time.

Please look inside this edition of the Community Briefing to learn more about the people and programs of the Westminster Police Department. As always, we welcome your thoughts or feedback on our efforts and appreciate your continued support.

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Photograph taken at the Orange County Human Relations Awards.

Pictured Left to Right: Chief Andrew Hall, Sergeant Mike Chapman, Officer Dave Bridgewaters, Greg Masters- OC Health Care, Annette Mugrditchian- OC Health Care, and Lance Lindgren- OC Health Care

STEVE PHILLIPS VIGIL



On January 29, 2008, the Westminster Police Officers Association hosted a Candlelight Prayer Vigil in honor of Officer Steve Phillips.

Officer Steve Phillips was a skillful and highly trained traffic investigator. He died in the line of duty on January 29, 2004, in a vehicle collision.

Steve's family, friends, and co-workers joined together around the Westminster Police Officers Memorial for a time of reflection and prayer.



NEW FACES

On January 29, 2008, the Westminster Police Department family proudly welcomed Rebecca Barlow- Police Service Officer, Mavic Hizon- Research Analyst and Joslin Clark- Dispatcher.



Rebecca Barlow-Police Service Officer

Rebecca joins WPD after starting her career with the Westminster School District; where she worked as the Safety Specialist. Rebecca has her Master's in Public Policy and Administration and a BA in Psychology, and Spanish Literature. Rebecca's experience in Emergency/Disaster Preparedness will help our Police Department and City become better equipped and prepared to handle such events. Rebecca will be working out of Special Operations/Traffic.

Mavic comes to WPD after working for the last six years at the City of Huntington Beach. Mavic has a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration and will be putting her experience to good use as our new Research Analyst. Mavic will be working out of the Administrative Services Bureau.

NEW FACES



Joslin Clark-Dispatcher

Joslin joins WPD after beginning her dispatcher career with Huntington Beach PD. Joslin was born and raised in Los Alamitos, and currently lives in Long Beach with her son, Andrew. Joslin's desire to help others and her interest in law enforcement helped lead her to choosing a career as a Communications Dispatcher. While testing with HBPD Joslin participated in a sit-along with our dispatch which led her to the decision that WPD was the department she ultimately wanted to be a part of. Eventually, Joslin had the opportunity to test for our department and has now been hired. Hats off to those of you met Joslin during her initial sit-along and made her feel so welcome.



On February 24th, 2008 we welcomed another Intern Travis Hartman. Travis graduated from Westminister High School and has been a Westminister Police Explorer for many years.



The Westminister Police Department welcomed Intern Henry Nguyen on March 17th, 2008. Henry is currently a student at Westminister High School.

POLICE ACADEMY GRADUATION

On March 21, 2008, a new group of community oriented leaders graduated from the Golden West College Police Academy. The graduation ceremony was held at Robert B. Moore Theatre at Orange Coast College. Members of area law enforcement, family and friends of the graduates attended the ceremony.

**CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!
WE WISH YOU GREAT SUCCESS!**



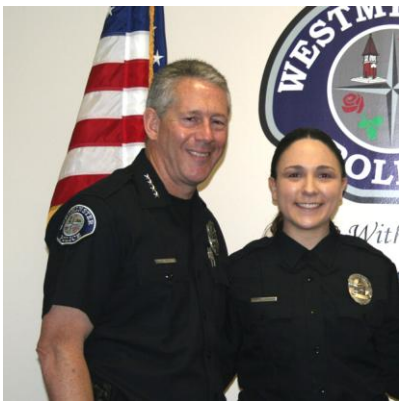
NEW FACES

On March 25, 2008 the Westminster Police Department family proudly welcomed Nick Lewis- Police Officer and Sara Velardo-Dispatcher.



Nick Lewis- Police Officer

Nick Lewis, former WPD Communications Dispatcher, graduated from the Golden West College Police Academy on Friday March 21st and became our newest Police Officer. Nick began as a Westminster Police Explorer, and then was hired as a Police Intern, eventually becoming a Dispatcher.



Sara Velardo - Dispatcher

Sara Velardo has the hiring process and was sworn in as our newest Communications Dispatcher. Sara has worked part time for Cypress PD as a police aid for the last 2 years while she completed her BA at University of California, Irvine.

PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS



Pictured at left: Front Row: Officer Don Webb, Sgt. Dan Schoonmaker, President Westminster Police Officers Association; Chaplin Charlie Wilkins, Capt. Mitch Waller, Capt. Ron Coopman. Back Row: Det. Dave Ferronato; Detective Kevin McCormick, Chief Andy Hall, Det. Mike Ogawa and Det. Bill Drinnin.

Westminster Chamber of Commerce awarded Charlie Wilkins with the 2007 Citizen of the Year and Soroptimist International, 2007 Organization of the Year. Charlie Wilkins has been a chaplain with the Westminster Police Department for nearly two years. Westminster Police Officers Association was proud to nominate and sponsor Charlie Wilkins. Other recipients to receive Public Service Awards were Officer Dave Bridgewater, Investigator Al Brackett and Supervisor Sonya Radziuk.

CONGRATULATIONS EVERYONE!



Westminster's 3rd Annual "Relay for Life" will take place in the Westminster Civic Center complex, Saturday, August 9th and Sunday, August 10th, 9:00 am to 9:00 pm. The Westminster Police Officers Association (WPOA) is a team sponsor and will have a team participating (4th year). The WPOA team "COPS FOR A CURE" will also be accepting donations (made payable to the American Cancer Society) for the team in an effort to raise more money than any other participating team at Relay. Investigator Al Brackett is the team captain for COPS FOR A CURE and team members will consist of active and retired police department personnel.

Relay for Life is the # 1 fund raising event for the American Cancer Society and 96% of the money raised goes to: Patient services, Advocacy and Research. Money raised in California stays in California.

Safety Day

Public Awareness Safety Day will be here before you know it. This year's events are scheduled for July 29th at Sigler Park. Mark your calendar! More details will be available as the date approaches.



Pet Safety

Many common household items can pose a threat to animal companions. Even some items specifically meant for pets could cause health problems. To protect your pet, simply use common sense and take the same precautions you would with a child. Although rodent poisons and insecticides are the most common sources of companion animal poisoning, the following list of less common but potentially toxic agents should be avoided if at all possible:

Cocoa mulch contains ingredients that can be deadly to pets if ingested. The mulch, sold in garden supply stores, has a chocolate scent that is appetizing to some animals.

Human medications such as pain killers (including aspirin, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen), cold medicines, anti-cancer drugs, anti-depressants, vitamins, and diet pills can all be toxic to animals. Keep medication containers and tubes of ointments and creams away from pets that could chew through them, and be vigilant about finding and disposing of any dropped pills.

Chocolate is poisonous to dogs, cats and ferrets.

Insect control products, such as the insecticides used in many over-the-counter **flea and tick remedies**, may be toxic to companion animals. Prescription flea and tick control products are much safer and more effective. Pet owners should never use any product without first consulting a veterinarian.

Poisonous household plants include azalea, geraniums, dieffenbachia, lilies, mistletoe and philodendron, among others.

Information Courtesy of The Humane Society of the United States

<http://www.hsus.org/>